

AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AND IMAGERY USED IN DUA LIPA'S SONG "LEVITATING"

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AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AND IMAGERY USED IN DUA LIPA'S SONG "LEVITATING"

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Abstract

This research aimed to identify kinds figurative language and imagery, also to describe the contextual meaning. This research used descriptive qualitative method. The figurative language and imagery was analyzed by using Arp & Johnson's theory in their book entitled "Perrine's Literature Structure, Sound & Sense" 13rd edition. The subject of this research was Dua Lipa's song lyric "Levitating." The results of this research: there are 17 figurative languages used in this song : 1 or 6% simile, 2 or 12% metaphor, 9 or 53% overstatement, and 5 or 29% symbol. There are 22 song lyrics that contains imagery : 8 or 36% visual imagery, 1 or 5% auditory imagery, 5 or 23% organic imagery, and 8 or 36% kinesthetic imagery. From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that figurative language and imagery have an important role in this song. Because they are able to beautify the song and help the listeners to imagine the story and characters based on the illustrations that the songwriter has provided in the song, also help them to better understand the meaning behind the lyrics of the song.

Keywords: Figurative Language, Imagery, Song

INTRODUCTION

Linguistics is the study of language, how it functions and how it is used to unify and interpret when people use language to communicate with others. To understand what the speaker means, the listener must interpret the speaker's words. In linguistics, the study of meaning in human language is often divided into two major areas those are semantic and pragmatic. According to Yule (1996:4) semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. In contrast, pragmatics refers to the study of speaker meaning. Regarding the statement, the listener has to know what the speakers mean when they speak. In pragmatics, it's called figurative language. According to Griffiths (2006) in Nursyanti et al., (2020), figurative language is a text that has a non-literal meaning. In other words, the sentences do not have a literal definition. It means that words or phrases that are figurative language have their meaning behind them. The use of figurative language will draw attention to the meaning of the words because it will give more meaning to the words while also making the language more beautiful. Figurative language is often found and used in speech, daily communication, advertisements, and also literary works. Literary work is an expression of a person's imagination, thoughts, and feelings that is meant to be beautiful. In literary works, some aspects assist it in becoming more meaningful and entertaining to listen and read besides figurative language, one of which is imagery. Imagery is represented through the language of sensory experience. Most of the experiences we have are made through our senses. For example, our experience of a spring day may consist of part of the particular emotion we feel and part of what we think but will mostly be a collection of sensory impressions (Arp & Johnson, 2020:759). Figurative language and imagery can be found in literary work, one of which in song lyrics. A song is a brief piece of music, and it often includes lyrics. There are a variety of messages that may be conveyed via music, it often includes information on how someone feels about something as well as their

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views about it (Milana & Ardi, 2021). Meanwhile, lyrics are an expression of someone's feelings about something they have seen, heard, or experienced (Yastanti et al., 2018). Thus, to comprehend it, one has to think deeper. If there is difficult vocabulary in the lyrics, one has to explain or pay special attention to providing meaning. It is necessary to understand and decipher the figurative language and imagery used in the lyrics to comprehend the lyrics. Each song serves a specific purpose that is communicated to the public as listeners. The creator's song contains well-crafted words in an appealing style and a song with a beautiful singer's voice (Yastanti et al., 2018).

Figurative language is one of the interesting elements in a literary work. Authors have different styles of expressing their ideas. According to Arp & Johnson (2020:774), figurative language is defined as language that cannot be interpreted literally or should not be interpreted literally. Figurative language is a language that employs words or expressions that have meanings that differ from literal interpretation. Figurative language is frequently more effective than direct statements in conveying meaning. Figurative language can be classified into many types, according to Thomas R. Arp and Greg Johnson in the book entitled "*Perrine's Literature Structure, Sound & Sense*" the thirteenth edition, there are eleven figurative language elements:

a) Simile

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A simile compares two things that are usually indicated by a connective, such as: like, as, than, or a verb, such as resembles, among other things. A simile is a figure of speech that expresses similarity. Still, for a simile to exist, the things being compared must be of different kinds (Kennedy, 1995:680).

b) Metaphor

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According to Keraf (2010:139), a metaphor is a form of analogy that compares two things directly but succinctly.

c) Personification

According to Kennedy (1995: 686), personification is a figurative language which endows an object, an animal, or an abstract notion (truth annature) with human attributes.

d) Overstatement

Overstatement or hyperbole, as defined by Arp & Johnson (2020) is simply An exaggeration, however it is an exaggeration in the interest of truth. Overstatement or hyperbole are used by speakers to emphasize what they truly mean, or to put it another way, to overstate their point.

e) Symbol

According to Arp & Johnson (2020), a symbol is something that means more than what it appears to be. It could be a person, an object, an action, a situation, or another story element that has a literal interpretation but also implies or represents other interpretations.

f) Allegory

An allegory is a narrative or description that conceals a deeper meaning. In allegory, there is frequently a one-to-one correlation between the features and a single set of secondary meanings (Arp & Johnson, 2020:801).

g) Apostrophe

According to Arp & Johnson (2020:773), an apostrophe is used to address something absent as if it were present, the dead as if it were alive, or the inanimate as if it were animate. In other

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words, the apostrophe is personifying something non-human or absent as if it were present and capable of responding to the writer's request.

h) Metonymy

According to Keraf (2010:142), metonymy is a figurative language that uses a word to express something else, because it has a close relationship. The relationship can be in the form of the inventor for the results of his invention, the owner for the goods owned, the effect for the cause, the cause for the effect, and so on.

i) Paradox

A paradox is a seemingly contradictory statement that is still true. It could be a scenario or a statement (Kennedy, 1995).

j) Understatement

According to Keraf (2010:132) he stated that understatement or litotes is a kind of figurative language used to express something with the aim of demeaning oneself. Something is stated less than the actual situation or a thought is expressed by denying the opposite.

k) Irony

Arp & Johnson (2020:817) stated that irony has implications that go beyond its use as a figure of speech. Irony enhances the reader's experience by adding depth and richness.

Imagery can be defined as the representation of sensory experiences through language. In poetry, imagery immediately appeals to our senses through song and rhythm, which we can hear when it is read aloud. However, indirectly attracting our senses through imagery, representations of sensory experiences in imagination and imagery can also help readers or listeners interpret the lyrics in a concrete way (Arp & Johnson, 2020:759). In general, there are seven types of imagery, this is conveyed by Sayuti in his book entitled "Berkenalan dengan Puisi", this was also conveyed by Thomas R. Arp and Greg Johnson in *Perrine's Literature Structure, Sound & Sense Thirteenth edition* which also classifies imagery into seven types, as follows :

a.) Visual Imagery

Visual imagery is an image generated by the sense of sight, in this case the eye. This imagery can provide stimulation to the eyes so that it seems as if they can see something that is not actually visible (Sayuti, 2010:174).

b.) Auditory Imagery

According to Sayuti (2010:174), an auditory imagery is an imagery produced by the senses of hearing (ears). This imagery can provide a stimulus for ears so as if they can hear something expressed through the imagery.

c.) Olfactory Imagery

Olfactory imagery is an imagery related to the senses smell (nose). Words that contain this imagery describe as if the object being talked about smells good, rotten, rancid, and so on (Sayuti, 2010:175).

d.) Gustatory Imagery

Sayuti (2010:175) states that gustatory imagery is an imagery involving the sense of taste (tongue). in this image as if we can taste something bitter, sour, sweet, sour, etc.

e.) Organic Imagery

According to Arp & Johnson (2020:759) an organic imagery is imagery that is associated with internal sensations such as hunger, thirst, fatigue, or nausea. This imagery helps us in experiencing an object or event that involves feelings.

f.) Kinesthetic Imagery

Kinesthetic imagery conveys a sense of movement, or images that are concretely immovable, but abstractly the object is moving (Sayuti, 2010:174).

g.) Tactile Imagery

Sayuti, (2010:175) states that tactile imagery is an imagery that involves the sense of touch (skin), for example rough, soft, smooth, wet, hot, cold, and so on.

Contextual meaning is defined as the meaning of a word or phrase that is dependent on the context in which it is used (Nursyanti et al., 2020). This form of study undoubtedly entails an interpretation of one's intentions in a given situation and the effect of that context on what is said. This necessitates an examination of how speakers structure their remarks in relation to who, where, when, and under what conditions they speak.

Dua Lipa is an English singer, songwriter, and model born in Westminster, London, on August 22nd, 1995. She is the daughter of ethnic Albanian parents. Dua Lipa's early career as a singer began in 2015. Levitating is Dua Lipa's song from her second album Future Nostalgia, released on March 27th, 2020 by Warner Records.

Based on the description above, the researchers were interested to analyze the figurative language and imagery and describe the contextual meaning in the song lyrics of Levitating by Dua Lipa. There are some studies that have been done related to this research. First, Gunawan et al., (2021) conducted a research that aimed to determine the types and the implicit meaning of the figurative language used in Blackpink featuring Selena Gomez's song lyric "Ice Cream." The results of this research, the figure of metaphor (48%) was the most frequently used in the musical discourse, followed by 28% of simile, 12% of repetition, and 12% of hyperbole. Second, Nurcitrawati et al., (2019) conducted a research that aimed to decipher the figurative language utilized in Disney song lyrics from the films Frozen and Tangled (Rapunzel). In this research, the songs that are being analyzed are entitled "Let it go" and "I see the light." The results of this research, there are five figurative languages found, such as: simile, hyperbole, idioms, alliteration, and personification. Third, Nursyanti et al., (2020) conducted a research that aimed to analyze what kinds of figurative language in Halsey's selected song: The Feeling, Colors, Without Me, Ghost, Haunting, Walls Could Talk, and Nightmare. The result of this research that the seven selected songs of Halsey have 2 or 13% of litotes, 1 or 6% of conceit, 2 or 13% of allegory, 4 or 25% of irony, 2 or 13% of litotes, 3 or 9% of symbol, 5 or 31% of hyperbole, 11 or 69% of simile, 8 or 20% of metaphor, 6 or 8% of rhetorical question, 2 or 13% of onomatopoeia, and 4 or 25% of personification. The differences between previous research and this research there were: first, this research not only analyze the figurative language but also analyzes the imagery and describes the contextual meaning of the research. Second, this research chose Dua Lipa's song entitled Levitating.

METHOD

This research employed descriptive qualitative research methods. According to Sugiyono (2018:9), descriptive qualitative research aims to better describe, explain, and answer research questions by examining as many individuals, groups, or events as possible. The subject of

analysis in this research were the song lyrics that contain figurative languages and imagery in the lyrics of levitating by Dua Lipa. In this research, the researchers play the roles as a planner, a collector of the data, an analyst, and a reporter of the data from the documentation of figurative language and imagery in the English song Lyrics Levitating by Dua Lipa. Furthermore, the data was a written document, the documentation technique was used by the researchers as the way to collect the data. The instrument used in this research were the researchers themselves and a datasheet to classified data. The researchers used steps as described by Putu Ratna (2017:8) as a data analysis procedure as follows: listening to the song, reading the song lyric, identifying the song lyric, classifying, re-analyzing, and reporting. The results of this research were presented in tables and descriptive form. The researcher converted each type of figurative language and imagery found in the song lyric of Levitating by Dua Lipa in the form of percent by using the formula stated by Hulu et al., (2021) as follows :

$$x = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where :

x = Percentage of the obtained figurative language or imagery

f = Frequency of each type of figurative language or imagery

N = The total of number of figurative language or imagery

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The objectives of this research were to explained the types of figurative language and imagery found in the song lyrics of Levitating by Dua Lipa and its contextual meaning. The results will be shown in the following tables.

Table 1. The Result of Figurative Language in Levitating by Dua Lipa

Kinds of Figurative Language	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Simile	1	6%
Metaphor	2	12%
Overstatement	9	53%
Symbol	5	29%
Total	17	100%

Table 2. The Result of Imagery in Levitating by Dua Lipa

Kinds of Imagery	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Visual Imagery	8	36%
Auditory Imagery	1	5%
Organic Imagery	5	23%
Kinesthetic Imagery	8	23%
Total	22	100%

Discussion

The contextual meaning of the lyrics of the song Levitating by Dua Lipa tells about the feelings of a woman who floats or levitating because she is happy to meet someone she loves. It can also be said that this song tells about someone who is in an atmosphere of falling in love.

Figurative Language

1) Simile

“My love is like a rocket, watch it blast off” (Line 46)

The song lyric above is a simile because it is marked with the word “like” and its meaning is implicit in the sentence. In the lyrics of this song the writer or singer compares her love for her lover to a rocket. It means, the songwriter feels her love for the man happens very quickly and explosively.

2) Metaphor

“I got you, moonlight, you’re my starlight” (Line 13)

It is a metaphor because it compares two different things directly without using connective words. In the lyrics above, the songwriter compares her lover to starlight. From these lyrics, it can be concluded that Dua Lipa really admires her lover because the light of the stars is something that twinkles, adorns and beautifies the dark sky at night.

“You, moonlight, you’re my starlight (you’re the moonlight)” (Line 34)

In the lyrics above, the songwriter compares her lover to the light of the moon. From the lyrics it can be concluded that Dua Lipa considers her lover as someone who shines who can illuminate her life with her light so that her life is brighter or more beautiful.

3) Overstatement

“Where the music don’t stop for life” (Line 4)

The above lyric shows excessive figurative language or hyperbole, because the sentence indicates something that is exaggerated. In the lyrics above it is mentioned that music don’t stop for life, it is something that cannot happen where music always plays without stopping for life.

“You met me at the perfect time” (Line 8)

The lyrics above are figurative language of hyperbole, because the lyrics above seem too exaggerated. Especially the words “perfect time”. The sentence means Dua Lipa felt that she and the man met at the right time.

“My sugarboo, I’m levitating” (Line 10)

That includes hyperbole because the line is exaggerated. The contextual meaning is that the word “levitating” in this lyric is considered to represent the feeling of someone who is in love and is an explosive feeling of happiness, where she really enjoys the process and atmosphere of falling in love which makes her feel lighter and feel complacent so that she feels floating or levitating.

“I need you all night, come on, dance with me” (Line 14)

This lyric has a contextual meaning that Dua Lipa loves this man so much that it makes her want to stay by his side and feel that she can't live without him so she needs him to accompany her to spend a long night together having fun because the next lyric has the sentence “Come on dance with me”.

“I believe that you’re for me, I felt it in our energy” (Line 19)

In this lyric Dua Lipa as a songwriter and singer exaggerates her belief, she feels confident and believes that the man she loves is only made for her not for anyone else they are destined to be together and Dua Lipa knows this because she feels her feelings through their energy when they first meet.

“I see us written in the stars” (Line 20)

This lyric is hyperbole, as it is highly unlikely that someone's name is actually written in the stars and this line is exaggerated. The contextual meaning of this lyric is that dua lipa is seducing her lover by saying that she and the man are soul mates.

“I feel like we’re forever every time we get together” (Line 25)

In the lyrics above, the word that indicates that the lyrics above is a figurative language of hyperbole is the word “forever”. Because basically in this world nothing is eternal which will not happen. The contextual meaning is that when spending time with her lover, she feels that their love will last forever as well as their relationship that will last forever and nothing will be able to separate them.

“You can fly away with me tonight” (Line 37)

The meaning of the word “fly” here is not the word “fly” which actually flies, but the word “fly” here is defined as having fun or being happy. The meaning of this lyric is that dua lipa invites her lover to have fun together or be happy together because they are enjoying the feeling of falling in love.

“And I’m feeling so electric, dance my ass off” (Line 47)

The figurative language in this lyric is shown by the word “feeling so electric” which contextually means that dua lipa feels very excited when she is in love and spending time with her lover.

4. Symbol

“If you wanna run away with me, I know a galaxy” (Line 1)

In the lyrics above is a symbol, which is included in the symbol is the word “Galaxy”. In this song, the word galaxy symbolizes a place. This lyric can be interpreted contextually as a comfortable and safe place for them.

“I had a premonition that we fell into a rhythm” (Line 3)

The word that shows that the lyrics above is a symbol of the word rhythm. The word rhythm does not mean the rhythm produced by a piece of music, but the rhythm in the lyrics means the atmosphere. The atmosphere described in the lyrics is an atmosphere of falling in love.

“Glitter in the sky, glitter in my eyes” (Line 5)

The lyrics above are included in the symbol, here there are two meanings of the form of the symbol, the first in the sentence “glitter in the sky” symbolizing a beauty because it can be believed to be a twinkling starlight in the sky at night. The second symbol in the sentence “glitter in my eyes”, has the meaning of admiration. So, the contextual meaning Dua Lipa really admires the man.

“Glitter in the sky, glitter in our eyes” (Line 23)

The lyrics above are included in the symbol, here there are two meanings of the form of the symbol, the first in the sentence “glitter in the sky” symbolizing a beauty because it can be believed to be a twinkling starlight in the sky at night. The second symbol is found in the sentence “glitter in our eyes”, which means to admire and fall in love with each other.

“But whatever, let’s get lost on Mars” (Line 26)

The word “Mars” which symbolizes a place. The word “Mars” in this lyric is interpreted as a safe place of escape for the two of them who are in love because they just want to spend time together without being disturbed by other people.

Imagery

1) Visual Imagery

“Glitter in the sky, glitter in my eyes” (Line 5)

Through these lyrics, listeners are invited to imagine what the songwriter is saying, that is seeing glitter in the sky or can be interpreted as a star and glitter in my eyes which means admiration. It is very clear that the word is an image related to visual imagery.

“Shining just the way I like” (Line 6)

In the lyrics above there is **1** visual imagery that is in the word shining. The meaning of the word shining in this lyric is **glitter in the sky, glitter in my eyes**, which are **the** lyrics of the song in the previous line. This causes listeners of the song to imagine seeing stars and shining eyes as **1** the singer likes and hopes for.

“I got you, moonlight, you're my starlight” (Line 13)

In **the** lyrics above there is a visual imagery, where the songwriter invites listeners to imagine if they are looking at someone who looks like moonlight and starlight in the night sky or can be interpreted as a figure who has a beautiful face.

“I see us written in the stars” (Line 20)

In the lyrics above there is a visual imagery marked by the words see, write and star. The songwriter invites listeners to imagine if they saw the names of a pair of lovers written in the **stars** scattered in the night sky.

“Glitter in the sky, glitter in our eyes” (Line 23)

In **the** lyrics above there is a visual imagery listeners are invited to imagine what the songwriter wrote, that is, they imagine seeing the stars in the sky and the eyes of a pair of lovers radiating admiration for each other.

“Shining just the way we are” (Line 24)

The lyrics above include a visual imagery in the word shining. This causes listeners to imagine seeing **1** the stars in the sky shining and their eyes that radiate awe shining like them.

“You, moonlight, you're my starlight (you're **1 the moonlight)”** (Line 34)

The visual imagery there are on the words **moonlight, you're my starlight** and **you're the moonlight**. These lyrics make listeners imagine and guess the figure of the man Dua Lipa admires.

“My love is like a rocket, watch it blast off” (Line 46)

In the lyrics above, there is a visual imagery there are on the words rocket and watch. This causes listeners of this song to imagine looking at and watching a rocket that is in the process of being launched into space.

2) Auditory Imagery

“Where the music don't stop for life” (Line 4)

In the lyrics above, an auditory image is indicated by the word music. Because it makes listeners of this song imagine as if they could hear music playing non-stop.

3) Organic Imagery

“I had a premonition that we fell into a rhythm” (Line 3)

The lyrics above are organic imagery contained in the word premonition. Premonition itself is also related to feelings, this causes the listener to also feel what the songwriter feels that is fall in **1** the rhythm of the feeling of falling in love.

“If you're feeling like you need a little bit of company” (Line **1**)

The lyrics above are organic imagery contained in the sentence “**feeling like you need a little bit of company**”. The sentence means feeling lonely, so in this lyric the listener is made to feel the loneliness that the man feels.

“I'm levitating” (Line 13)

This lyric makes listeners feel the sensation of falling in love that makes the songwriter feel so high.

“I believe that you're for me, I feel it in our energy” (Line 19)

These lyrics make listeners feel the belief that the songwriter has about her love destiny.

“And I'm feeling so electric, dance my ass off” (Line 47)

From these lyrics, listeners are invited to feel the joy felt by the songwriter.

4.1 Kinesthetic Imagery

“If you wanna run away with me, I know a galaxy” (Line 1)

From this lyric, listeners or readers of the lyrics of this song can the listeners imagine Dua Lipa and the man going alone to escape to a new place.

“And I can take you for a ride” (Line 2)

From these lyrics, listeners and readers of the lyrics of this song can imagine the time when Dua Lipa took and asked the man to go together to escape.

“I need you all night, come on, dance with me” (Line 17)

This causes listeners and readers of the lyrics of this song to seem to be able to see Dua Lipa's movement to invite the man she loves to dance and have fun together.

“We can go wherever, so let's do it now or never” (Line 21)

This causes listeners and readers of the lyrics of this song to seem to be able to see Dua Lipa's movement to invite the man she loves to travel together.

“You can fly away with me tonight” (Line 37)

This causes the listeners and readers of the lyrics of this song to seem to be able to see the movement flying away, so the lyrics above are included in kinesthetic imagery.

“Baby, let me take you for a ride” (Line 39)

From these lyrics, listeners of this song can see Dua Lipa's movement taking the man for a walk, so the above lyrics are included in kinesthetic imagery.

“My love is like a rocket, watch it blast off” (Line 46)

This causes the listeners of the song and readers of the lyrics of this song as if they can see the movement of the rocket that will be launched.

“And I'm feeling so electric, dance my ass off” (Line 47)

This causes listeners to seem to be able to see the dancing movements performed by Dua Lipa because she feels very excited.

CONCLUSION

From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that there were found four types of figurative language, among others: simile, metaphor, overstatement and symbol. Furthermore, there were four types of imagery as follows: visual, auditory, organic and kinesthetic imagery. The meaning of the song tells about romantic things that is feelings and atmosphere of someone who is in love.

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